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ABSTRACT

Goals for the social studies programs for Indian children in Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools are identified as (1) helping the child to comprehend his experiences and to find meaning in life, (2) preparing him to participate effectively in the dynamics of his society, and (3) assisting each person in understanding the analytical processes and problem-solving tools developed by scholars in the social sciences. Criticisms of the social studies programs have stemmed from inconsistencies evidenced by "what is claimed for social studies" as opposed to "what our Indian students and research people say is being accomplished in this area." Thus, new directions for social studies include structure based upon a conceptual framework that draws from all the social sciences, concepts introduced at an earlier age, improved teaching methods, more and better media, and attention to the modes of inquiry, skills, and treatment of data. In keeping with this, the Washington office of BIA is committed to the assistance of areas, agencies, and local schools in implementation of new and better social studies programs. (LS)

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POSITION PAPER

SOCIAL STUDIES IN BIA SCHOOLS

In very recent years there have been a number of studies completed concerning social studies education as well as several projects involving social studies curriculum development. There are at the present time many similar projects that have been funded for the purpose of developing new materials and new approaches to social studies teaching. The National Council for the Social Studies along with the learned societies and universities have been exerting a great deal of effort to bring the thinking more nearly in conformity with current times. Though there is still evidence of discord and disagreement it can be safely said some agreement has emerged from this myriad of published materials.

Throughout the Bureau of Indian Affairs, one cannot overlook the present state of ferment and the increasing interest in upgrading social studies programs. Conversations with faculties, supervisors and the education specialists throughout the Bureau, indicate a great deal of dissatisfaction with the social studies programs and the more commonly used teaching methods employed in the social studies. It would appear that the established goals for social studies are not being accomplished as effectively as they might be. Projects such as those initiated at Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Pine Ridge, South Dakota, are both indicative of an awareness of people within the BIA to the urgent needs in this area of our curriculum.

Those who express dissatisfaction with social studies programs being offered Indian and Eskimo children, find additional support in the fact that the curriculum most frequently used is not one that has been designed to meet the unique educational needs of Indian and Eskimo children. For lack of this type of program teachers are thrust into the necessity of utilizing the State guides for social studies in the respective states in which they operate. Needless to say, these guides were not developed with the specific educational needs of Indian or Eskimo children in mind. These guides fail to consider adequately the cultural gap that must be bridged before the social science program in BIA-operated schools can have maximum relevance to the world of the Indian or Eskimo child. Some ideas expressed by Bradshaw and Renaud will serve to illustrate and are as follows:

1. Our society is highly commercialized and depends greatly on the concepts of marketable skills, private property, time schedules and money, while a large number of Indians and Eskimos are just learning to operate in the dollar system.
2. Our society is extremely complex when compared to the small and simple Indian groups.
3. We are highly industrialized while the Indian is still not completely incorporated into the industrial system.
4. We are highly inter-dependent as opposed to the separateness of Indian communities.

5. Our society is multi-cultural and multi-ethnic while the Indian's tends to be quite homogeneous.
6. Our society is increasingly urban with a value structure based upon urbanization as opposed to the Indian traditional community.
7. We are a scientifically oriented people while Indian communities tend to function in a pre-scientific and empirical way.
8. Ours is a highly literate society as compared to Indian communities that function with partial literacy.
9. Ours is a talking society based on efficient communication and utilizing a host of devices and systems while the Indian's is a continuation of a silent type of society.

This list could be expanded with little difficulty, but suffice to say that the unique educational needs of Indian and Eskimo children are multiple and the social science program being generally applied to them, while basically the same as that of the respective States in which these children are found, is not always providing those educational experiences necessary to equip them to function successfully in the economic, political and social arenas in which they find themselves, be it in their respective villages or in the dominant culture.

Educators and scholars representing the disciplines involved in the social studies and history are becoming increasingly aggressive about the deficiencies that have been propagated

and the resultant needs. Those disciplines which are commonly accepted as contributory to the social studies and history programs are geography, economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, psychology, and philosophy.

PURPOSE:

Three general goals direct the social studies. Although there are many ways of putting them, perhaps the following statement will identify them adequately.

1. The social studies should help the child comprehend his experience and find meaning in life. This should be interpreted to include opportunities for the student to analyze some aspects of his environment and his reactions to it and the forces operating in society that tend to make people what they are.
2. Each child must be prepared to participate effectively in the dynamic life of his society. Correspondingly his society needs active, aware and loyal citizens who will work devotedly for its improvement.
3. Each person needs to acquire an understanding of analytical processes and other problem solving tools that are developed by scholars in the social sciences. With increasing maturity the students should learn to ask fruitful questions and examine critical data in social situations.

The tools for accomplishing the three-fold objectives reside in the social sciences and history. The teacher helps the student learn the tools of social economic and political analysis

prevailing in the social sciences and history. He also helps him examine the social world about him, leads him to face social problems and helps to comprehend his experience. As he grows in ability to apply the concepts of social science to his own experience and to contemporary society, his social world will become more comprehensible to him and he will be better able to participate rationally as a citizen. Social studies should be centered on the student's examination of his social world and he should be helped to examine topics in such a way that he progressively learns to apply, not merely memorize, the intellectual tools of the social sciences. Some of the mentioned criticisms of currently existing social studies programs may serve to amplify this statement.

Criticisms:

Many of the most outstanding criticisms of social studies programs stem from the inconsistencies that are evidenced by what is claimed for social studies as opposed to what our Indian students and research people say we are accomplishing in this area. Some examples of these are as follows:

1. An articulated and coordinated program is claimed, yet we continue with a scope and sequence that is sketchy, repetitive and that fails to provide ample consideration for the new and valid areas of study that are pertinent to our times. A disproportionate portion of the curriculum is concentrated in local and western cul-

tural areas, yet the United States is exercising a role of world leadership and our Indian children as citizens must function in this arena. A treatment of the same aspects of American history is frequently repeated at several grade levels.

2. We claim to produce an enlightened and inquiring citizenry, yet we avoid many critical issues, conflicting ideologies, and social problems.
3. Educators claim to develop skills related to the disciplines in the social studies, yet authoritarian texts and authoritative teachers from which students expect to receive answers and teachers expect students to commit said answers to memory, are utilized.
4. The interrelatedness of knowledge is discussed, yet it is segmented and not interrelated. History is taught for history's sake. Each discipline is treated separately with little effort to structure the social studies into a conceptual framework that demonsrates relationships and that has utility for life.
5. With the exception of classroom time that is delegated to social studies education, social studies is placed in an inferior position when compared to other content areas of the curriculum. Witness, for example, the expenditure of funds at the

national level for the development of science and mathematics programs since 1958 as compared to that of the social studies. Social studies people should be making a comparable expenditure of funds for curriculum development and teacher training to those of the other major content areas.

6. The claim is made that a social studies program is designed around sound educational policies and practices, yet social studies courses that act as obstacles to education are frequently developed. The social studies are more susceptible to influence by vested interest groups than any other content area. All students are required to jump the same hurdles in the same fashion. The curriculum is often so designed that it supports the idea that man lives in a static sterile world.
7. It is said material must be relevant, that is, current and have applicability for present times. Yet, a great proportion of irrelevant and unapplicable materials are used. Teachers should more and more ask themselves the question "why" certain things are taught or certain materials are used in social studies and if educators cannot come up with a reasonable or practical answer for "why," it may then be that there are better things that could be done with the time.
8. Often too little effort is made to keep materials updated that are used in social studies classrooms. Additionally, failure to take advantage of the latest findings

of the scholars in their respective fields is frequent.

9. Programs are often accused of being superficial and unchallenging without adequate consideration for new media, changing conditions and the maturity level of the student. On the other hand, at times some rather sophisticated materials are thrust upon students who are not yet intellectually ready for them.

DIRECTIONS:

The discouraging situation depicted in the preceding statements need not imply that social studies education is a lost cause in our BIA schools.

Scholars and educators are combining their efforts and are now offering enough agreement to clearly indicate the direction to be taken in order to at least temporarily improve the situation. The rapidity with which change is occurring renders it extremely doubtful that a long enduring or permanent solution will be found. Rather, educators and the Bureau must remain flexible and constantly in tune with conditions that will prevent a recurrence of the malady that has afflicted the social studies program of the past. One solution if properly developed would result in the incorporation of those points currently agreed upon by many national authorities in social studies education as essential for instructional improvement in this area. They are of such significant importance as to merit some mention.

1. The most promising of the social studies curriculum development projects are attempting to provide some structure for the social studies based upon a conceptual framework that draws from all the social sciences and not primarily from history and geography. Educators in the Bureau of Indian Affairs must think in these terms when considering scope and sequence development in the social studies program. They must also provide for the insertion of changes, substitutions and increases in the body of knowledge without recasting the entire social science curriculum. There is considerable evidence to indicate this has already begun. The aforementioned curriculum development projects currently being undertaken by the Bureau are examples of this.

2. Concurrently, many of these concepts should be introduced at a much earlier age than is now commonly practiced. Findings by Bruner and Senesh and others clearly indicate more complex ideas can be taught to a much younger child than had formerly been believed possible providing we adapt the approach to the maturity level of the child.

3. Once progress of this nature begins at the primary level, the door is open to provide for a sequence of the development of concepts and generalizations with greater consideration for the maturity of the child throughout his entire educational career. By beginning at the primary grades and developing a well-coordinated and

articulated program, the fundamental idea relationships of the knowledge of the disciplines can be related to the child's experiences on all grade levels increasing in depth and complexity with the increasing maturity of the child. Thus, the expanding environment theory with its concentric circles representing a wider horizon for each succeeding grade level, appears to be yielding in favor of the conceptual spiral approach to learning. Additionally, provision for increased localization of the vehicles through which ideas can be examined as well as the local needs regarding the ideas themselves must be considered.

4. One of the most stimulating aspects of all is the trend toward improving teaching methods in the social studies by incorporating a discovery approach and an inductive process. Educational psychologists have long proposed that it is through these methods that what has been learned is really understood and put to use. However, most advocates of the use of inquiry and discovery recognize that because of the limits of the pupils ability to handle research tools and the limits of time, only selected parts of the total social studies program can be taught in this way; but the benefits of the discovery approach, along with the use of more conventional methods, can be made to carry over to portions of study that proceed through me-

thods considered more traditional. Additionally, many teachers are dissuaded from a more extensive use of induction and/or a reflective thinking process by being made to feel that it is highly esoteric or that they must understand all the works of educators such as Bruner before they are competent to utilize it in any form in their classroom procedures. Rather, a relatively simple change of emphasis on the types of questions teachers utilize might produce progress in this direction much more rapidly. Questions like: "What do you think abou this?" or "Can you prove it?" "Is there additional information available?" might do more toward arriving at these desired goals of our social studies program than questions that merely require students to commit masses of data to memory. While it is desirable and even necessary that teacher understand their goals and objectives while using a specific teaching strategy, educators must avoid the pitfall of stifling teacher initiative by over-ritualizing the teaching process.

5. For many years a multi-media approach to classroom instruction in the social studies has been advocated. This may be interpreted to include multiple texts, paperbacks, original documents, programmed materials, readings from the period, field trips, artifacts, and audio and visual aids. The availability of funds through re-

cently enacted educational legislation should add impetus to this movement in the Bureau. It should be the objective of each area to provide extensive reference materials and teaching aids for use in the social studies classrooms.

6. Much attention is being devoted by curriculum planners and social studies teachers to a greater emphasis on the non-historic aspects of social studies. This emphasis includes non-western cultures, international relations, and particularly the behavioral sciences. It should be noted that the *Basic Goals* for BIA schools provide for this.

7. It is believed that the traditional social science program attempts to cover too much. Since the available time that can be utilized for social studies is already, in most instances, fully taken and since the addition of new content areas is being advocated, it is reasonable to expect that some of the content now taught must be deleted. Many feel a better job could be done with a carefully selected but more restricted content and by covering in-depth that which is studied.

8. Finally, much more attention must be given to the modes of inquiry, skills, and treatment of data that are utilized by the scholars representing those disciplines involved in the social studies. If students understand how the facts and conclu-

sions they are studying have been arrived at by the scholars, they will be better prepared for new information, new interpretations, and the need to revise their own concepts in the future. This can help students become more intelligent consumers of social data. In the increasingly complex world the individual is subject to a barrage of evidence from all sorts of "experts." If he has gained some comprehension of the gathering and treatment of social data, the individual is more likely to use them more discriminately as a basis for rational choices.

Plan for Action:

Within the next few years educators will witness some rather dramatic changes in social studies programs and teaching. The content of the social studies programs is becoming more closely allied with the social sciences. More efficient means of instruction are being sought and discovered. For example, instructors no longer take several weeks to build a model of something being studied if the same job or same concepts can be taught by showing ten minutes of film. However, the child must become involved. Educators are now vitally concerned with values and reflective thinking on the part of students. Therefore, it is most critical that the curriculum be relevant to these ends.

If a breakthrough in the social studies is to be realized, provision for more concrete assistance to those who will be ultimately responsible for this breakthrough must be made. An

atmosphere must be developed that is conducive to experimentation on the part of areas and social studies teachers. One major problem in the implementation of these ideas is that of maintaining the atmosphere for experimentation and flexibility without creating an unorganized and disoriented situation throughout the Bureau in which individual schools and teachers might pursue all directions. The Washington office is, however, committed to the assistance of areas, agencies and local schools in the implementation of change through support of the eight preceding items listed under the heading of "Direction" in this paper. Some media through which progress in this direction might be realized are as follows:

1. Support of the Basic Goals as were published by the Bureau in 1966.
2. Support of in-service workshop programs involving classroom procedure and the development of new media and materials.
3. Support of areas, agencies and institutions of higher learning that are interested in upgrading social studies instruction through the development of new programs.
4. The development of a new handbook for social studies teachers in the Bureau. This need not immediately incorporate a new social studies program in its entirety but might rather contain some examplar modules of an inductive approach and some sources of ideas for the implementation of the philosophy for social studies instruction contained in this paper at various grade levels.

5. The development of a social science program aimed at meeting the specific and unique needs of Indian children.

Plans for Evaluation:

Since it may be some years before the completion of a truly valid evaluative instrument, it may be that the feelings and interest on the part of students and teachers utiliizing the newer approach, can be quite indicative of the degree of success of the program. Teachers and agencies can accomplish a great deal through their own observations and the development of devices aimed at measuring behavioral results.

The lack of any widespread or standardized evaluative devices for measuring the effectiveness of this type of program does make evaluation somewhat more difficult than it would otherwise be. However, there are evidences of beginnings that should result in some improvements of the situation. In the meantime, teachers must keep in mind that the traditional data-oriented types of evaluative devices are valid in measuring only a part of the effectiveness of the social studies program.

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